

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 EB-11 FEA-02 TRSE-00 PC-04

AID-20 COME-00 DRC-01 /171 W
----- 087071

R 191058Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1639

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY ROME

USINT CAIRO

USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 0251

E.O9-11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SO

SUBJ: SOMALIA JOINS ARAB LEAGUE

REF: A. MOGADISCIO 0237; B. MOGADISCIO 0250

1. SOMALIA'S ACCESSION TO ARAB LEAGUE HAS RECEIVED EXTENSIVE PUBLICITY FOLLOWING OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT BY PRESIDENT SIAD LATE FEB 16. FOLLOWING AFTERNOON, SIAD ADDRESSED CROWD OF ABOUT 15,000, LARGE FOR MOGADISCIO, AT OPEN-AIR CEREMONY IN CITY. CEREMONIES IN OTHER TOWNS THROUGHOUT COUNTRY REPORTED IN PRESS.

2. MAIN THEMES OF PUBLICITY INCLUDE IDEA THAT SOMALIA'S ACCESSION IS NATURAL CULMINATION OF HISTORIC AND CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS WITH ARABIAN PENINSULA, OBSTRUCTED ONLY BY DIVIDE AND RULE

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POLICY OF IMPERIALISTS; THAT MOVE IS THUS BLOW AGAINST IMPERIALISM; ALSO THAT SOMALIA'S ACCESSION WILL FURTHER STRENGTHEN

TIES AND FORM BRIDGE BETWEEN ARAB AND OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES. WIDESPREAD HOPES FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE NOT DIRECTLY MENTIONED IN MEDIA, BUT IMPLIED BY GENERAL REFERENCES TO ECONOMIC COOPERATION.

3. IN INTERVIEW WITH BBC SOMALI LANGUAGE CORRESPONDENT ON FEB 16, PRESIDENT SIAD REPLIED TO QUESTION ABOUT HIGH OIL PRICES BY SAYING IT WAS "MISTAKE" FOR ARABS TO HAVE SAME PRICES FOR FRIENDS AND ENEMIES. THIS COMMENT INCLUDED IN BBC SOMALI AND ENGLISH-LANGUAGE BROADCASTS FEB 17, BUT NO REFERENCE TO IT HAS APPEARED IN SOMALI MEDIA. MOFA CHIEF OF PROTOCOL REMARKED TO DCM FEB 17 THAT GSDFR "EXTREMELY GRATIFIED" BY VOA'S HANDLING OF SOMALI ACCESSION.

4. DELICATE QUESTION OF POSSIBLE INCREASED STATUS FOR ARABIC LANGUAGE SKIRTED IN MEDIA WITH OCCASIONAL REFERENCE TO INCREASED TEACHING OF ARABIC IN SCHOOLS, BUT NO MENTION OF OFFICIAL STATUS FOR ARABIC LANGUAGE IN GOVERNMENT.

5. COMMENT REACHING EMBASSY CONTINUES TO INDICATE (REFTEL A) THAT ACCESSION TO LEAGUE IS BROADLY POPULAR IN SOMALIA, ESPECIALLY AMONG THOSE GROUPS LEAST ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT "SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM".

KIRK

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